BROWNHELM's "*NORTH CLIFF*" RISDEN FARM;
A PHOTOGRAPHIC-HISTORY

2010

t. derby

[all photos , courtesy of "the Risden family", (except the 'Baumhardt House', courtesy of "the Baumhardt family")]

BROWNHELM.

August 25, 1883.

Joshua Phelps fell from his house on Thursday last and had a terrible shaking up. It is feared that his injuries will prove fatal.

BROWNHELM.

September 3, 1883.

Died, August 26, Joshua Phelps, aged 48 years. His funeral was held at the Congregational church, Wednesday, the 29. Mr. Phelps was one of our most enterprising farmers, and a man well respected by all. His death was caused by the injuries he received by the fall from his house, we spoke of last week.

(The house that "killed" Joshua Phelps later became George and Mae Risden's "*North Cliff*" farm.)

The old Homestead.

“ June 1912 “

[same date as '*The old Homestead*' photo]

(notice the “Widow's-walk” rooftop railing)

[circa-1914]

(notice that the “Widow's-walk” railing has been removed from the roof ;
also notice the poor condition of the old sandstone-slab sidewalk)

[circa-1916]
(notice the new concrete steps to roadway)

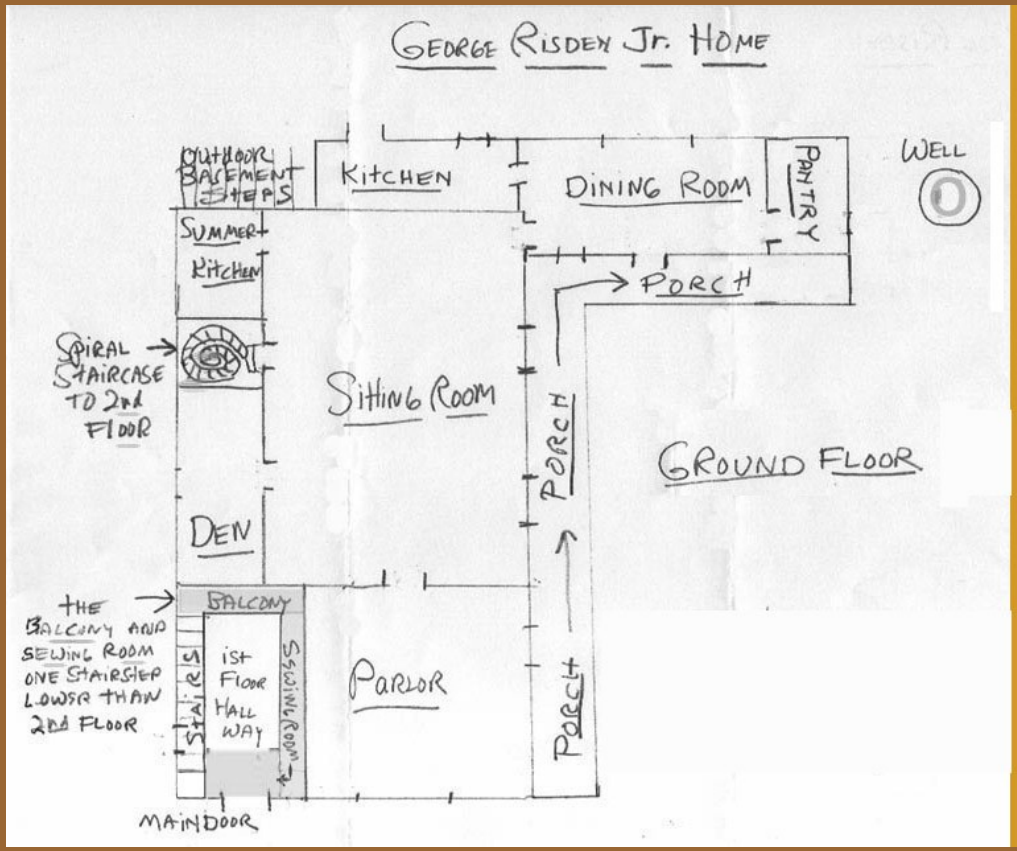
[circa-1920]

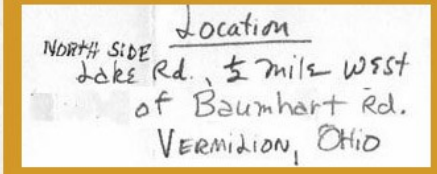
^ [circa-1933] **v**

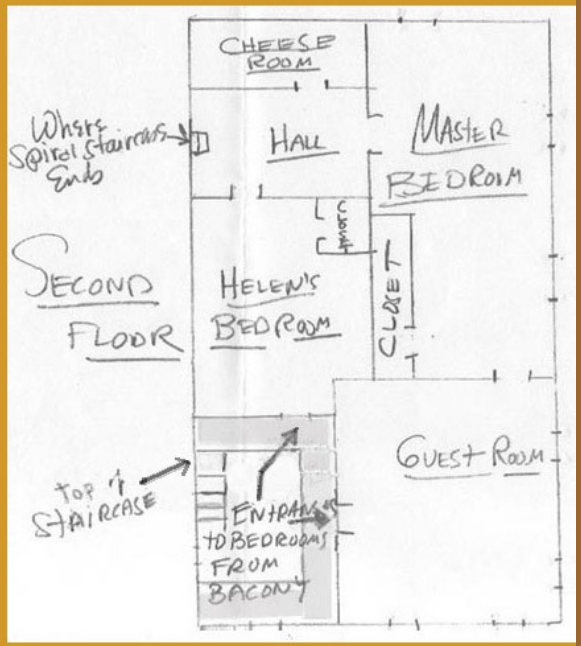
[note: George Risden had died in 1936**;** and sometime after that, his widow, Mae, went to live with her family near Chicago, where she died in 1944, (although she lived with her in-laws, the Sherod family west of Vermilion, for a few of those years).]

“1946 ”

[This year (or slightly prior) was approximately the final year
that members of the Risden family owned this home;
(however, it had merely been a rental-property after circa-1937).]







FLOOR-PLAN of the PHELPS / RISDEN HOUSE
(as remembered and re-created in '2010' by
the daughter of Helen Chupik / Risden)

EXTERIOR 'DETAILS'

[front door (and George Risden), 1912]

[front “picture-window”,
(stained-glass upper section)]

[rear side of house, circa-1927]

[stairway window (stained-glass),
on west side of house (next photo)]

THE “OUT-BUILDINGS”

[The west side of the house, with the 'privy' ('outhouse') at the rear.]

[note: the floor-plan (as re-created in '2010') seems to indicate that the home never had an indoor bathroom during the Risden-family ownership]

[unidentified (and muddy?) woman]

[Mae Risden (circa-1916)]

In 1912, a large shed (or an older small house)
was behind the "east wing" of the main house,
(as 'cropped' from "*The old Homestead* " photo).
That structure was torn down (or moved
across the road ?) before circa-1916
– by that time, only a low-fenced
enclosure occupied that area.
(See background of the photo at right;
and the next photo of that same 'enclosure'.)
[also notice the double-seated swing, above]

[Helen, getting a drink from the new 'well' (circa-1916)]

By circa-1916, the wooden railing of the “widow's-walk” (the observation-deck on the house's rooftop, with an unobstructed view of Lake Erie) had been removed from the roof of the house, and placed alongside this fence (which had also been relocated – from the east border of the front yard).

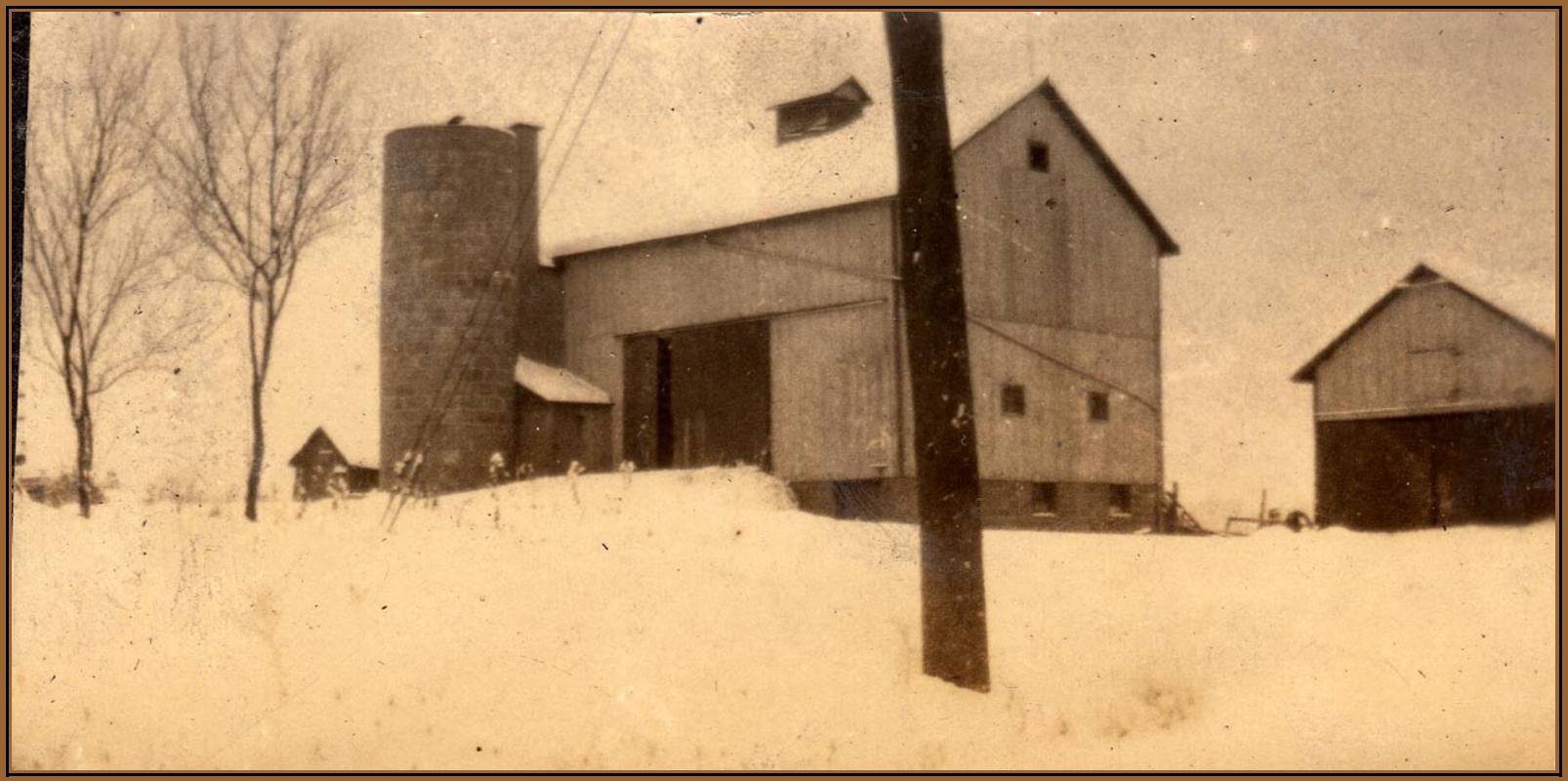
(During 1912-1916 there seems to have been an ambitious effort to “modernize” the entire appearance of the house and its surroundings.)

[< George Risden]

..... AND ACROSS THE ROADWAY

[circa-1912]

[circa-1918] (notice the “mailbox”, moved to that side of the road)



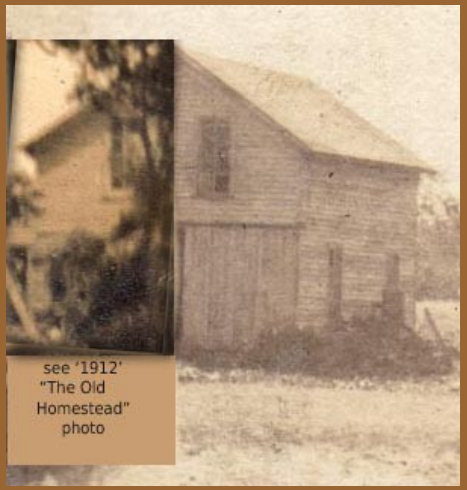
[circa-1920]

(notice the additions to the 'silo', connecting it to the barn)

[circa-1930]

[Helen, standing in front* of the “tenant-house”, circa-1914]

(*- The roadway is between Helen and the tenant-house. The big barn would be just outside of the photo, to the right)



[A later view of the tenant-house (woman unidentified) --- Was that “shed” moved here, from across road ?]

[circa-1916 view of the barn and shed, from the adjacent “Brown's Lake Road Cemetery”.]
(image 'cropped')

“ THE NEIGHBORHOOD ”

(Helen)

[Schoolhouse, just west of “Shepard's* Creek” and the Risden house.]
(This school building may have been built circa-1875,
when this 'lot' was purchased from Adam Kishman.)
The photo is circa-1906. (The teacher might be “Miss Moreland”?)

{ *- originally named in honor of the early owners of this land,
the Shepard family. It was later renamed “Brownhelm Creek”.}

[“Shepard's Creek” on the Risden farm (south of their barn), circa-1927.]

[“BROWN'S LAKE ROAD CEMETERY”, circa-1916]

(Half of this cemetery actually extended into the Risden property**;** but their 'Braun' neighbors to the east erected a fence through the center of the cemetery so their livestock could “graze” it – which kept this side cleared of 'brush', but also unfortunately caused the tombstones to be broken off, when the livestock used them as scratching-posts.)

THE 'BRAUN' FARM

[These images, of some of the many structures on the Braun farm, were 'cropped' from various photos of the Risden farm.]
(The upper photos, circa-1912, are arranged as a “panorama” view.)

The main house seems to have been the structure at upper-right,
(the photo at lower-right, is that same structure circa-1929).

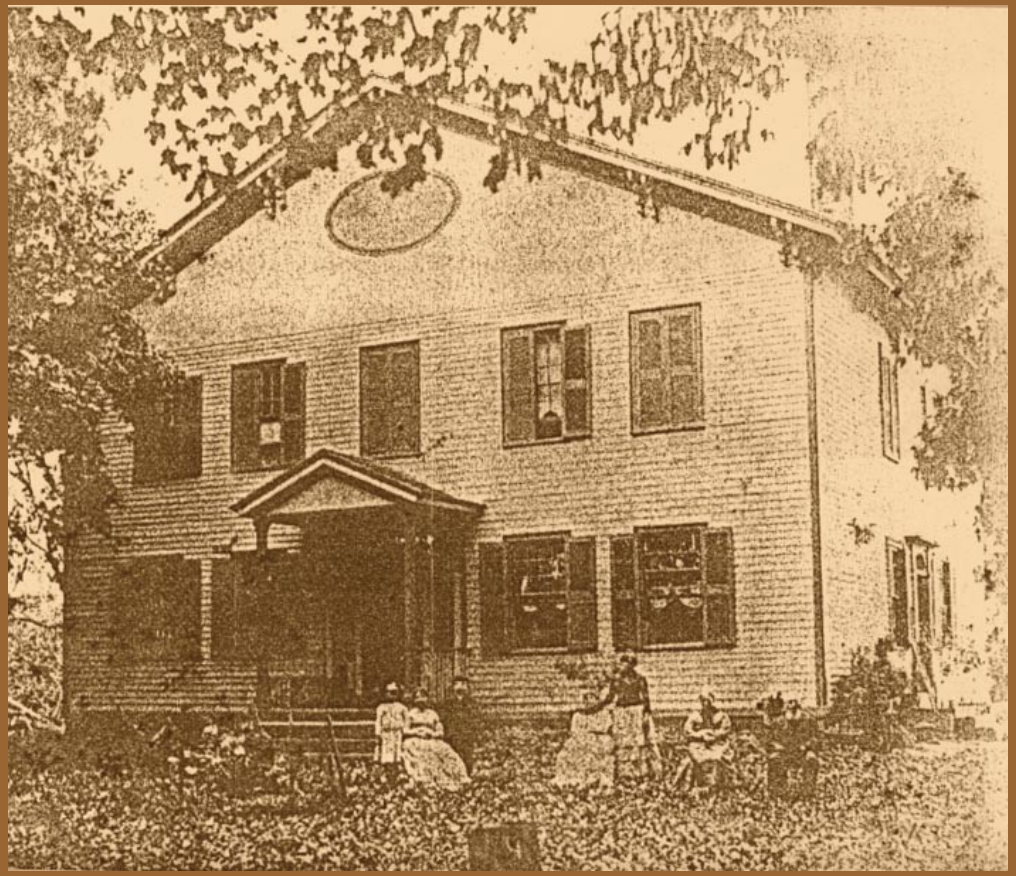
{ Aerial photos from a few decades later, seem to still show most of these same structures, plus several additional.}

[note**:** this German-immigrant family often used the spelling '*Brown*'**;** but they were not part of the Brown family who founded Brownhelm.]

[circa-1929]

(the 'Braun' house, behind the Risdens' grandchildren)

[COL. HENRY BROWN'S HOUSE]
(later, the BAUMHARDT HOUSE)



Built circa-1826,
for Col. Henry Brown,
(the 'founder'of Brownhelm Twp.).
This is how it looked circa-1865,
when Adam Baumhardt purchased it.

But later (probably before 1906 when the Risden family moved into their home about a half-mile west), there was a "slight" change to this exterior **:**
the oval ornamental 'medallion'
was replaced with a rectangular,
(and out-of-proportion), window.

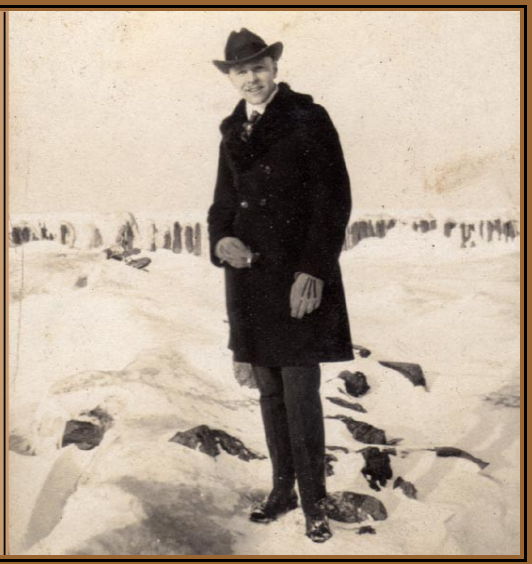
(Members of the Baumhardt family
continued to own this house until
the 1960s, when it was bulldozed for
a parking-area and highway-overpass
for the "Lorain Ford plant".)

…. AND, (of course), LAKE ERIE

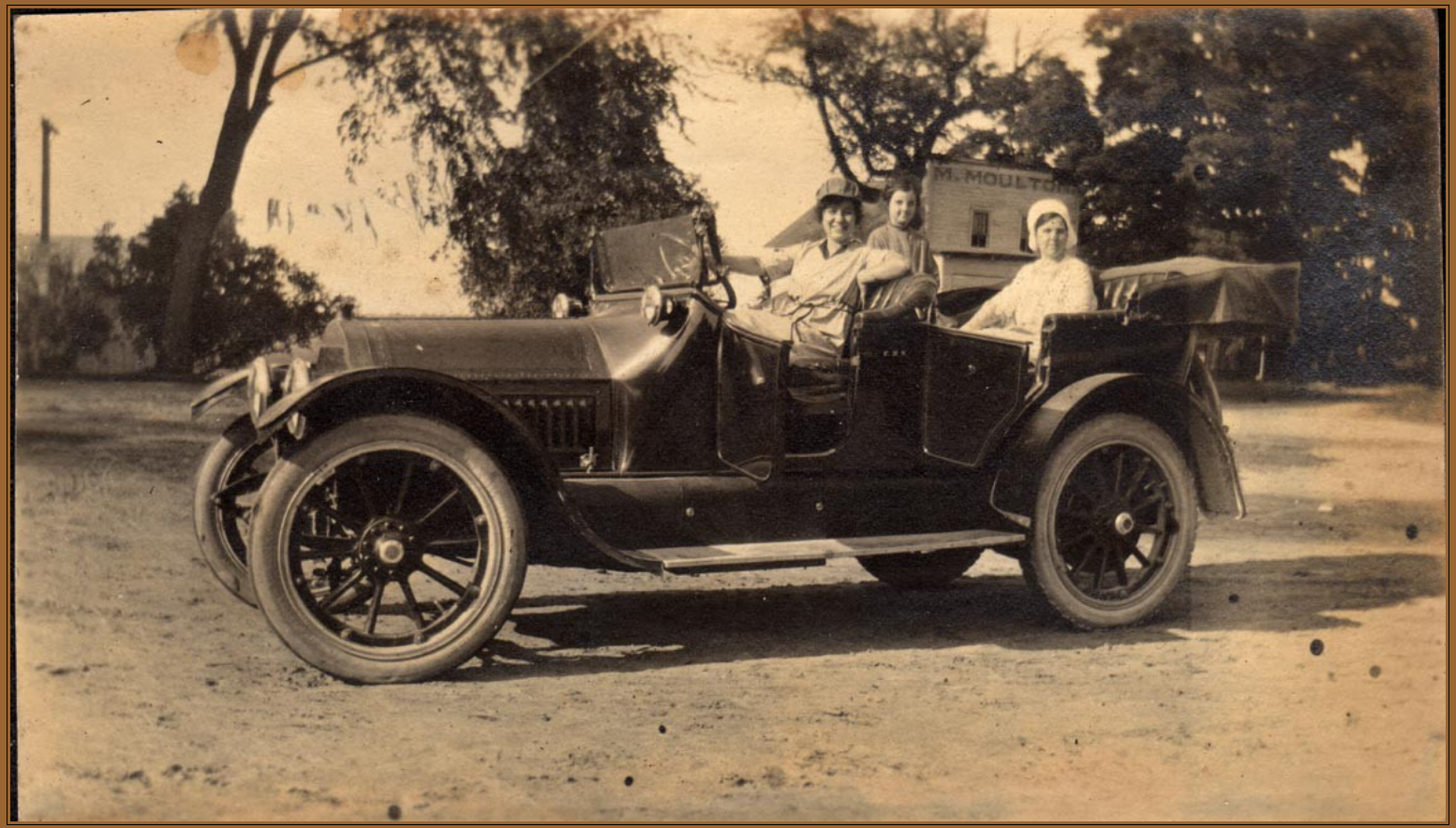
^ (from near “Camp Kilbane”, looking 'east', towards Risden's “North Cliff ”) ^

^ (looking 'west', from Risden's “North Cliff ” towards “Camp Kilbane”, during wintertime)

[The wooden '*pylons*' extended along the Lake shore almost all the way from “Hole-in-the-Wall” beach (near Beaver Creek) to west of the Risden farm**.** Some sources indicate that these were used as a “sand barrier” --- not to preserve the beach, but instead were installed by construction-supply companies, to “harvest” the sand that accumulated around them. (These photos seem to suggest that the enterprise was very successful – to the degree that the sand along that whole section became greatly depleted by circa-1918.)



SOME “MOTOR CARS” …..



[At Brownhelm “corners”, circa-1914]
(unidentified riders; but this might be the same car
in the photo of the “tenant-house”, also circa-1914)

[The Risden's new 'Reo', circa-1924]
(this car was said to be mainly driven by Mae)

[circa-1936 Plymouth (?), at the Ranney (?) house]

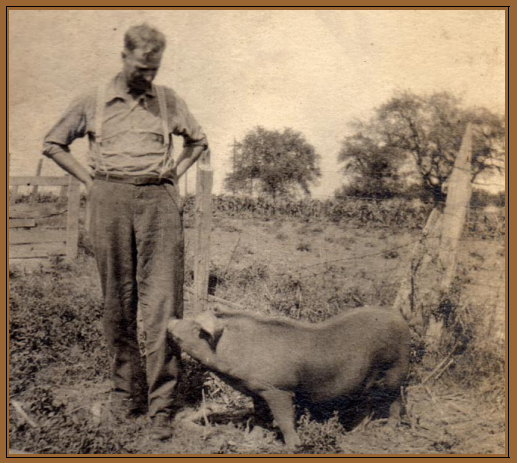
[circa-1927]

... BUT,
NO
'TRACTOR'

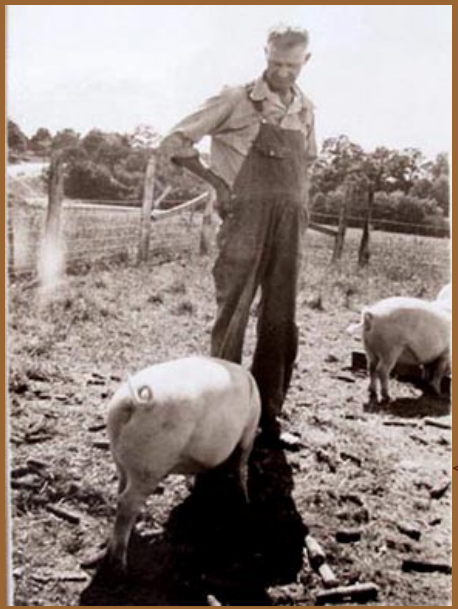
(The “Nickel Plate” R.R. and the “streetcar”/interurban tracks, and Lake Erie, in the background.)

[circa-1932]

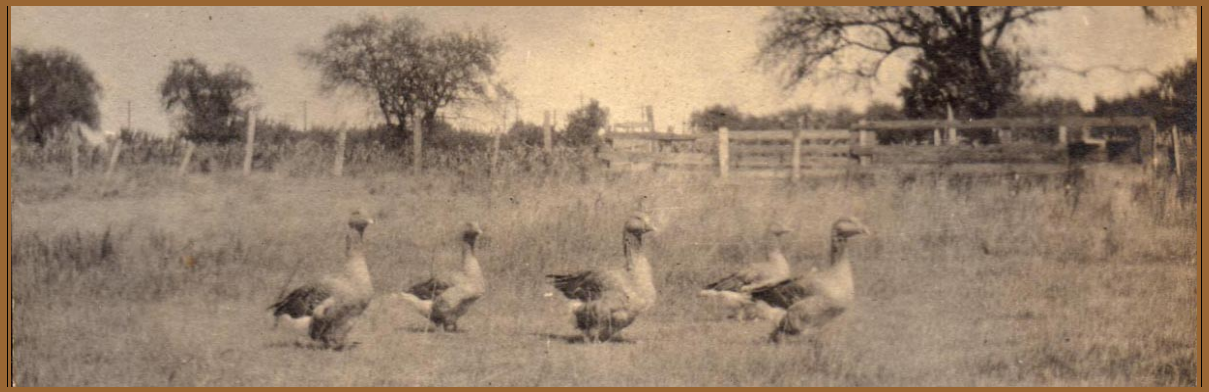
…. AND PLENTY OF 'MOUTHS' TO FEED

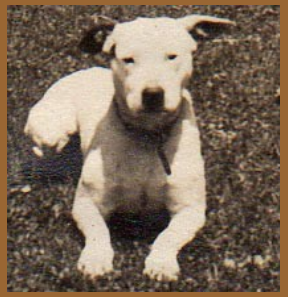


^ [circa-1914]



< [circa-1932]
(notice the road-widening construction)



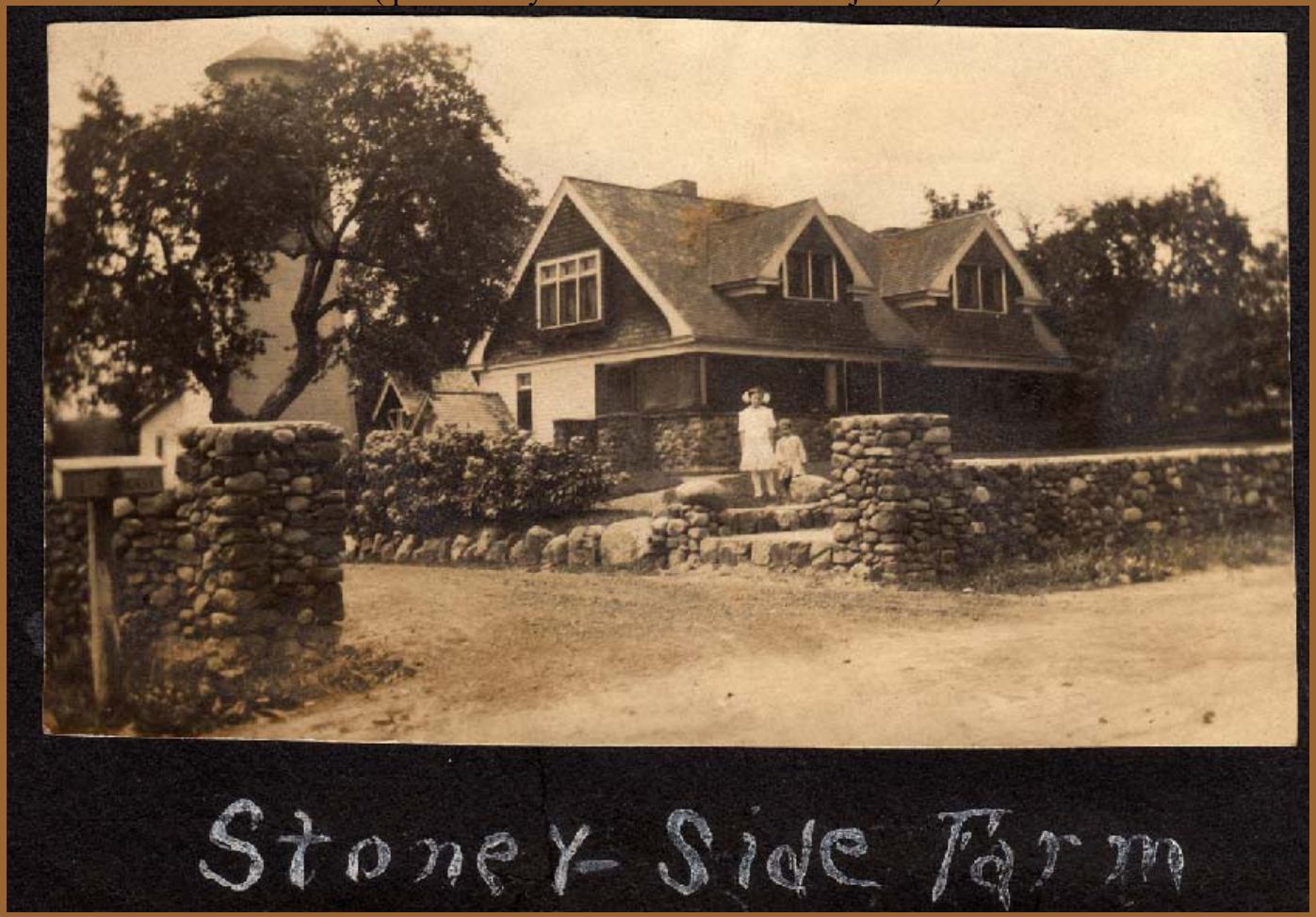


[the “old” dog, in 1912]

[and the “new” dog]
(circa-1916)

SOME “MYSTERY” PHOTOS

(presumably of somewhat local 'subjects ')



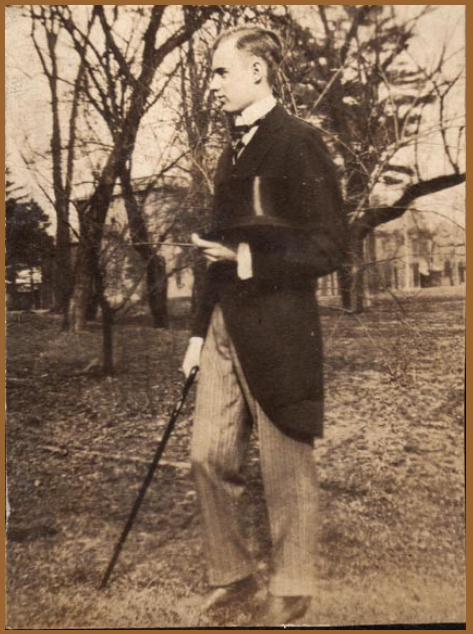
(note: the little boy in that photo is the same as the one in the '1912' “*The old Homestead*” photo)

.... AND SOME OTHER FAMILIAR* FACES (AND PLACES)

[* - to the Risdens, anyway]

[Lake Erie erosion of the cliff at “North Cliff”, circa-1918]

v "Ralph"



[maybe Lewis G. Humphrey, etc.]

[circa-
1922]

(from left:
Frank,
Helen,
George,
Mae)
>

(from right:

Lewis G.
Humphrey ?

his wife
Gertrude ?

and their two
children ?)

<

< ^ [same boy and man, in the“mystery” photo]

[Virginia (Humphrey) Troyan, Mae Risden, and ?, at “Shore Inn”(circa-1940?)]

[“Shore Inn”, circa-1932; see next photo]

(circa-1932) "SHORE INN" (a former home of George Risden's family, west of Vermilion)

[This house was probably built for one of the "Josiah Pelton Jr."s --- but not the '*pioneer-settler*' sea-captain Josiah Pelton, whose own homestead was near the north end of present-day Coen Road, (and, it is also a modern contrived myth that the above house was the birthplace of the inventor of the "Pelton Wheel"). This later Risden farm was subsequently purchased for creating a summer resort-complex; but, by the time of this photo, that enterprise had failed, and the property was vacant.]

Mae Risden's 'HUMPHREY' family

William Henry Humphrey was the son of Henry and Jannette (Ball) Humphrey. He was born January 9th, at Vermilion, Ohio, Erie County, in 1845. He was educated in the country schools and after he grew to maturity, associated himself with the traffic of the Great Lakes, shipping as a boy on the old propeller of Cleveland of the Northern Transportation Company, boats running between Ogdensburg and Chicago. The Captain of the Cleveland, whose name was Reed, taking an interest in William Humphrey, encouraged him to make the following of the Lakes his profession

The next year, 1862, he shipped on the propeller Wisconsin, belonging to the same line, remaining with that boat during the season. In 1863 he shipped as seaman on the schooner Tracy G. Bronson, following three seasons on the schooner Exchange with Captain Rowell. In 1867 he was given mate's berth on the schooner Exchange with Captain M. Thompson for the season. In 1868 he was mate of the schooner Escanaba; in the season of 1869-70 he was mate of the schooner Negaunee; and in 1871 he was mate of the Alva Bradley. Changing his associations with the Bradley fleet, to that of M. A. Hanna & Company, in the spring of 1872, he took out the schooner M. A. Hanna. This schooner was launched at Quail shipyards, and was one of the finest boats of the time, sailing the Leonard Hanna for eight years, when he turned his attention to steamcraft.

In the spring of 1881 he was appointed master of the steamer Oscar Townsend; the confidence entertained by the owners in him was but a repetition of his previous experience, as he retained his command seven years, during that time proving himself as capable of handling a steamboat as a sailing vessel. He then transferred to the steamer R. R. Rhodes, which he sailed as master one season, the following season serving on the new steamer Neosho, and in the spring of 1891 bringing out the new sister ship Neshoto, which he continued to sail seven years, laying her up at the close of navagation of 1897. He superintended the construction of the three last-named steamers, which he brought out new--the R. R. Rhodes, Neosho and Neshoto --- all of which are well-built; he also owned some interest in them.

“*North Cliff*” house,(and the “Braun” house, and the “Baumhardt” house), in '2010':

:-(